RGGVY envisages electrification of all the un-electrified villages and provision of access to electricity to all rural households in the country, including Maharashtra by 2009.

Power shortage in Maharashtra

253. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the electricity shortage and problems being faced by the people and industrialists, particularly in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto;

(c) the details of steps taken by Government for increasing the electricity generation and supply;

(d) whether Government are considering any exclusive proposal for increasing electricity generation in the State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Electricity is a concurrent subject. Supply and distribution of electricity in a State/UT is in the purview of the respective State Government/State Power Utility concerned. The Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Government by establishing power plants in central sector through CPSUs. The following steps have been taken/are being taken to improve overall availability of power in the country:

(i) Augmentation of generation capacity to the tune of over 78,500 MW is proposed for the 11th Plan.

(ii) Development of Ultra Mega Power Projects of 4000 MW capacity each under tariff based competitive bidding route.

(iii) "Partnership in Excellence" Programme starting With adoption of better operation and maintenance (O & M) practices to enable enhancement of Plant Load Factor (PLF) of existing thermal power stations through tie-up with well performing power utilities as a pre-cursor to renovation and modernization.

(iv) Renovation, modernization and life extension of old and inefficient generation units.

(v) Harnessing surplus captive power into grid.

(vi) Strengthening/Augmentation of sub-transmission system in State under Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (APDRP) as a major step towards reduction of Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT & C) Losses.

(vii) Coordinated operation and maintenance of hydro, thermal, nuclear and gas based power stations to optimally utilize the existing generation capacity.

(viii) Strengthening of inter-state and inter-regional transmission capacity for optimum utilization of available power.

(ix) Promoting demand side management, energy efficiency and energy conservation measures.

(x) Rigorous monitoring of production, transportation and supply of coal by an Inter-Ministerial Group on weekly/fortnightly basis to review and resolve the constraints.

(d) and (c) Besides other measures, the following measures have been taken exclusively for increasing of electricity generation in Maharashtra:

(i) Capacity Addition of about 4750 MW is proposed in the State Sector in Maharashtra during the 11th Plan.

(ii) Revival of the Dabhol Power Project under the aegis of Ratnagiri Gas and Power Private Ltd. with facilitation through an Empowered Group of Ministers.

(iii) The establishment of Mauda Thermal Power Project (1000 MW), the first NTPC Project in the State with maximum share to the Home State.

Power projects in Maharashtra

254. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC) has cleared two power projects of 2640 MW in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, by when these projects are likely to be started;

(c) the total expenditure involved in these projects; and

(d) to what extent these power projects will help in meeting the shortage of power in Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

U.S. patent of yoga asanas

255. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the U.S.Patents and Trade Mark Office granted patent on yoga asanas (postures) in America;

(b) if so, whether the U.S. Patent Office can grant patent rights, when yoga is India's traditional knowledge and as per conventions, traditional knowledge cannot be patented;

(c) whether Government have taken up this matter with the US administration; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) A search of the database of the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) indicates that no patent has been granted on yoga postures *per se*.

(b) Patents granted to products, processes or methods, which are already in the domain of public knowledge, are not legally valid. As yogic postures are well known for ages, no valid patent can be granted to yogic postures.